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# **DIRECTIVE ON THE NECESSITY OF BURYING CREMATED REMAINS**

March 1, 2006

My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

It is an ancient tradition of the Catholic Church to reverence the bodies of our dead. This practice exists not only because the body has been a temple of the Holy Spirit, but also as a sign of our belief in the resurrection of Jesus and our hope of resurrection.

For these reasons, as your Bishop, I urge you to adhere to the long-standing practice of burying your dead in a Catholic cemetery. In these days of increasing disrespect for the human body, and excessive commercialization of cemetery grounds, it is even more important now, than in the past, to bury your dead in a consecrated cemetery.

This teaching applies to cremation, which is an acceptable practice in the Catholic cemeteries. When the body is cremated, all of the ashes are to be buried, and buried in the same place. Ashes are not to be kept for personal use, such as placing them in a piece of jewelry or keeping them on the mantle; nor are the ashes to be divided and buried in two different plots. In respect of the deceased and in recognition of the resurrection of the body, the ashes are to be buried in one plot.

In today's changing world with its uncertainty, Catholic cemeteries will welcome and serve you and your family whether you use a family owned, privately owned or corporately owned funeral home. Remember to state your preference for a Catholic cemetery when planning funeral services.

I wholeheartedly support and encourage you to consider seriously the purchase of your burial site in a Catholic cemetery.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Rev. Ronald P. Fabbro, C.S.B.  
Bishop of London

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